



## 7-1/8-1 Discussion: The Empowered Employee

Note: This discussion spans two modules and is graded at the end of Module Eight.

Your first post is due in this module, and your follow-up posts (two) are due in the next module.

An important element of total quality management is employee empowerment. Refer to the module resources for several articles about employee empowerment. After reviewing these articles, think about whether you have ever been empowered at your job. Based on your answer, respond to the appropriate prompts below.

For those who have been empowered:

- Describe how you were empowered at your job and how this made you feel as an employee.
- Chapter 14 of the textbook identifies nine implicit promises to employees. Identify and explain which two promises, in your opinion, provide the most benefit for the employee and organization in relation to your example of empowerment.

For those who have **not** been empowered:

- Provide your opinion of why your company does not embrace the concept of employee empowerment.
- Chapter 14 of the textbook identifies four preconditions that are necessary for empowerment. Identify and explain which two preconditions are lacking in your company and how they impede the empowerment process.

Finally, provide a description of how your views about quality have changed since the beginning of this course.

Provide at least two detailed responses to other students' posts about their empowerment experience. When responding to other posts, compare and contrast your empowerment experiences. Also, comment on your fellow students' views about quality.

To complete this assignment, review the [Two-Week Discussion Rubric](#) document.

## Rubrics

### OL 324 Discussion Rubric: Undergraduate

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## 7-1 Discussion

Brooklynn Barney posted Jun 17, 2020 10:56 PM [★ Subscribe](#)

I work in a human service organization, but my job duties are those done behind the scenes, instead of interacting with patients. In March, our organization chose to send most of our staff on furlough and stopped all services, except urgent care services and curbside pharmacy pick up. I thought for sure I would have been furloughed because my job didn't pertain to the areas that were still operating, but I was wrong. In fact, my name was brought up to assist with multiple different duties, ones that were typically handled at a higher level in the organization. As much as COVID-19 terrified me, I was so thrilled to still be employed, working, and seen as a valuable asset in such an uncharted time. I was tasked with being the "project manager" for a massive personal protective equipment inventory room, which wouldn't seem like a big deal prior to COVID-19, but is very critical now and going forward. This project entails building a system that can be adopted going forward across the division.

I would say that the promise stating "you will not be penalized for making painful changes" and the promise stating "management trusts you and is worthy of trust in return" are the two promises that are fitting in this scenario. I was tasked with a massive project, one that is new to the division, one that holds significance for future developments, and one that is critical in ensuring our organization is prepared for this pandemic going forward. My leadership is allowing me to build systems and work alongside a team that is dedicated to continually improve our process and efforts in making the function of the inventory room efficient and effective. In return, our team takes guidance and suggestions from leadership as necessary and works to assimilating change as needed.

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## 7-1/8-1 Discussion

Kelly Parshley posted Jun 18, 2020 9:50 AM [★ Subscribe](#)

Hi everyone,

I feel more empowered in my current position than any other before. My job involves reviewing long-term disability claims and determining if a settlement offer is appropriate. Our department trusts our team to make critical financial decisions, and we take our jobs very seriously as we are dealing with a claimant's monthly income. My manager provided each of us with the training and tools necessary to perform our job independently when he hired us. He reminds us frequently that he trusts our decision-making ability, has no wish to micromanage, and will always be there as a means of support when it is needed. When our team is faced with a new challenge, he is quick to seek out our opinions regarding possible solutions. He does not just give the appearance of caring about our opinions; he has accepted our ideas on multiple occasions and presented them to senior management (with credit to us) as the best way forward.

Several of the nine implicit promises to employees apply to my own example of empowerment. The first is, "you will have greater control over your own work". (Foster, 2017) My manager gives us greater control over our own work by trusting us to make important decisions regarding claims on a daily basis. I think that trusting employees by giving them control over their work is a great motivator for them to exceed expectations. This benefits the employees in their career aspirations and benefits the organization because high performing employees make important contributions to financial and performance results. Another implicit promise that applies to my own example is, "management values your ideas and opinions and will give them serious consideration". (Foster, 2017) A couple of years ago, senior management introduced a Six Sigma-style program called, "The Brighter Way". This program puts decision making regarding job responsibilities in the hands of employees, who are constantly working toward continuous improvement. Through the process, we introduce new methods of performing certain job functions. Some things we are able to implement without any oversight and others that involve multiple departments require sign-off by senior management. This benefits employees because we feel that

our voices are heard and we are contributing to changes. The organization benefits from new ideas that may have not been considered before.

Throughout this course, I've learned that quality within an organization isn't just an ideal or an aspiration. There are established tools and methods that organizations can use to maintain efficient performance, empower employees, and measure the success of process changes. I've also learned that a company may view the quality of its goods and services differently than how a customer perceives it. Ultimately, the customer determines the true quality of the goods or services, so it's critical for organizations to be aware of customer perception. (Foster, 2017)

Reference:

Foster, S. T. (2017). *Managing Quality: Integrating the Supply Chain* (6th ed.).

Retrieved from: <https://mbsdirect.vitalsource.com/#/books/9780133800388/>

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## OL 324 - Discussion Post - The Empowered Employee

Samantha Cornell posted Jun 15, 2020 5:39 PM [☆ Subscribe](#)

The job that I was empowered at was my job at the local coffee shop and café. I have mentioned this job in countless other posts because it truly was the most well-ran, incredible job experience. In this job I had more autonomy than I could have ever imagined. I was allowed to run the counter how I wanted (assuming it was my shift as the front counter person) and I could do the same in the kitchen. We typically worked two people at a time unless it was a pizza and pasta night since

everything was made in-house and to order. Coming up with the best way to do things with the team members I was working with each night was so much better than being forced to do it a certain way. I also had autonomy in my creative choices. I wrote on the doors, the daily special boards, and I even hand-wrote the entirety of the menu that hung on the wall. It was a huge project, but my boss gave me total control of the design, I just needed to include the items she wanted (price for a whole meal, half a meal, etc.) Being able to work at a job I already loved, plus getting this creative freedom that my heart desires so much was incredible.

The two promises that I find would be the most beneficial in relation to my empowerment are having control over your own work and being rewarded for changes that benefit the company. I find that a lot of the time, the higher up workers in a business do not fully understand the processes that go on in running the business on the general employee level. When they listen to what the people actually doing those jobs has to say, it will most of the time be to the benefit of the company to change the process to that suggestion, or an altered version of that suggestion that makes it even better. Being rewarded is something that humans are always looking forward to, so that would also benefit the company for the employees to be striving to do better.

My views about quality themselves have not really changed but the understand of the processes has. I find that there are many ways to implement change to make it easier and more manageable to everyone involved.

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## 7-1/8-1 Discussion: The Empowered Employee

Katie Frisk posted Jun 17, 2020 4:01 PM [☆ Subscribe](#)

Over the course of the various jobs I have worked, I have been lucky to be empowered in each one; if it didn't start that way, typically by the time I left or as time went on I was able to independently work and make decisions that were highly regarded my management. In my current position, I have a great amount of autonomy in which I am empowered to lead the technicians as I see fit, provide answers and insurance information to patients, educate physicians and sales reps on our processes and interpreting software for the three day brain wave studies (EEG) that we conduct. I absolutely love the fact that the company I work for believes in me and understands that I have the knowledge to make the best possible decision as I have proven through my work ethic and various actions. I think this is one of the biggest motivators, and when much of that empowerment was removed recently, it negatively affected my perspective on my job and position as it felt as though the organization had lost trust in me although it was to redistribute job roles and power throughout the business.

In Chapter 14, several promises are covered that are considered to be the pinnacle in empowering one's employees. The two promises I have chosen to further examine are "You will not be penalized for making painful changes," and "Management trusts you and is worthy of trust in return,". I feel for the position and industry that I currently work in; the nature is extremely fluid and dynamic as one must always be prepared for changes. Sometimes this means that the leader has to make tough decisions to allow the organization continued growth which needs to be supported by management and higher executives if the trust they have in you is actually legitimate. Additionally, this is why trust plays a large role in my job as if mistrust or apprehension occurs, then the entire balance of the organizational structure is thrown off resulting in decisions being made two and three times (Foster, 2017).

Coming into this course I had a base knowledge of quality management from previous courses I had taken for my leadership minor. I always have valued quality as I believe that it is necessary to instill a positive reputation in the workplace as if this is a standard that is implemented from the beginning it becomes a part of an organization's culture early on. This course has taught me varying levels and strategies that I was not once aware of and through case studies has depicted what can go wrong if not course-corrected and monitored early on. I have truly enjoyed this class as I have learned a lot that I have already begun implementing. It's been a pleasure learning with all of you this term!

Reference:

Foster, S. T. (2017). *Managing quality: Integrating the supply chain*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

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## 7-1/8-1 Discussion: The Empowered Employee

Wesley Blankenship posted Jun 17, 2020 8:19 PM [☆ Subscribe](#)

Although I have had plenty of jobs during my working career, the one that I can relate to as far as empowerment, is my current place of employment. My organization, including the "upper management" portion, allows the employees to share ideas and or ideologies in order to create a well rounded community. I had come up with the idea to implement a Kaizen reward system for any employee that had ideas for how to improve a process, tool or way of working. This would allow employees who are not normally comfortable coming forward and presenting their ideas and would allow the organization to see the improvement and how much it would benefit and save the company money. As to my surprise, considering I was asking for the company to give out \$50 gift cards to anyone that had the best idea or saved the company the most money, upper management thrived on the idea and empowered me to get the ball rolling not only in my current organization here in Houston, Tx, but also amongst our corresponding office in Oklahoma. This really made me feel empowered and trusted in the fact, they let me keep the idea I had and did not try to throw their flare into it.

The two promises that I feel are most important to my empowerment, are having control over your own work and being rewarded for the changes that benefit the company. Having the support of upper management in trusting me with my idea and implementing it among two organizations, gave me the true power of being in control of my work, literally. Having my name associated with the Kaizen program that is posted on the company website, with a little incentive for completing and implementing a new process that will be followed by all employees across the globe, was a true reward.

Now being in the manufacturing background, I knew quality was very important and technical but since taking the course, my view of quality has become more apparent. With the completion of each module, I would go to work and discuss the course material and or process with the quality manager to see if he has heard or knows of them, to my surprise, there were actually a few that he was not aware of. Now the supply chain quality process is still something that I am very interested in learning more of because it seems that there is more involved with it than meets the eye. All in all, I am very thankful for this class and appreciate the info that was covered in each module, it really has opened my eyes more to the quality aspect of things.

Wes

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## Module 7

Tonya Giggy posted Jun 17, 2020 8:22 PM [★ Subscribe](#)

Becoming empowered is something that most people want to feel. There are different types of people who see empowerment as having control, they are in the position of power, or there are those who just want to lead others to the finish line. As for me, I am the later one. I want to see all employees succeed, become what they set out to be, and be proud of what they have earned along the way. For many, many years I was one of those empowered people who managed a department, hired and fired, and reported to the senior management and the Chairman of the board. I worked hard for several years to get to that position and once I reached my goal I was sure to keep it by putting in every ounce I had. The position I held made me feel like I had succeeded in what I set out to accomplish, it also made me feel as if I could do whatever my mind set out to do, even without any schooling to back me. When I reached my goal and was now making construction/mortgage loans to those looking for the American Dream, I looked back at the time when I started and thought, 'wow, I was just a stay at home mom who cleaned the house, mowed the yard, cooked and did laundry'. I have far surpassed what I thought was an ordinary day that most ladies live. How wrong I was since being a mom is probably one of the hardest jobs to be had. Anyways, the job I held was meaningful, enlightening, and stressful at the same time. I loved when I could tell my clients they were approved to build their dream home. I loved when senior management praised me for conducting myself in a professional manner with both customers and FDIC auditors (which I would do even without the praise). I loved the perks that came along with being 'empowered', such as leaving early from work every now



and then, or having PTO with pay, which was a reward often given by the higher ups, and being invited to attend luncheons with the big wigs. Not that I was eating with the big wigs because that did not matter to me, what did matter was that I was engaged in behind the scene information that could help me help my team without divulging information from the higher ups. It was a win-win for all.

However, when the going gets tough, the higher up gets the bad end of the stick, so remember what rolls down hill when you are looking to climb the ladder.

#1-Management is committed to quality improvement over the long haul: This in itself says a lot to employees. When you hear that the management is in it for the long haul and they want nothing but the best, then employees know that the turnover rate is going to be hardly none and the company will settle for nothing less than. However, this could be a double edge sword since the turnover will be minimal, the employees will wonder how they would be able to climb the ladder.

#2- You will be rewarded for making decisions that benefit the company: Your work will be noticed and you will be rewarded for putting the company first. What a great way to have dedicated employees. Always reward employees and they will give you their all.

Managing Quality, Foster, Thomas S., Sixth Edition, Chapter 14 Managing Quality Improvement Teams and Projects, Retrieved from: [mbsdirect.vitalsource.com](http://mbsdirect.vitalsource.com)

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## Module 7 - Empowerment

Richard Lauer posted Jun 18, 2020 7:19 PM [★ Subscribe](#)

Throughout the past 30 years of my career I have held positions within the organization in which I felt truly empowered as well as positions in which I felt that I was not empowered at all. I am fortunate that over the past six years of being in my current position that I feel more empowered than I ever have in the past. My current Director does not micromanage his staff at all. There are times when weeks will go by with very little if any interaction occurs with my Director. As an effective leader he fully trusts that we are managing our teams and taking the appropriate actions needed to support the organization. With that said, each Manager had to earn this trust and demonstrate that we had the proper leadership skills to effectively manager our teams. Knowing that your Senior Leadership has complete trust in you to manage the needs of the organization is very inspiring as well as motivating to perform to the absolute highest levels possible. I have an incredible working relationship with my Director and have the utmost respect for him both professionally and personally. Over the past six years I have observed the many managerial behaviors and techniques of my Director and have adopted most if not all of them in my daily managerial responsibilities.

After reading the nine implicit promises to employees in chapter nine over and over I feel that the two that would be most beneficial are “You will not be penalized for making painful decisions” and “Management trusts you and is worthy of trust in return”. I believe that each of these promises are vital for employees to feel empowered, trusted, and respected as key individuals within the organization. A key component to empowerment is giving people the power to make decisions without having to request approval. As leaders we are all going to make some really good decisions as well as some not so good decisions that’s just reality. In my opinion, no one within the organization should feel fear of being penalized in any way for making a bad or painful decision. That in my opinion is not a healthy environment and one that will not be good for employee morale. The second implicit promise that I selected was solely based on the word “Trust”. Perhaps the most critical piece to any relationship is trust. In my opinion, if there is the slightest lack of trust in a relationship that the relationship will not be healthy. I believe that if our Senior Leaders and Managers truly demonstrate that they empower us and have the highest levels of trust in us that we will trust them in return. Again, if there is a lack of trust in our senior leaders that will create an unhealthy work environment which will negatively impact morale.

I am grateful for having had the opportunity to take this class as it has given me many more tools that I can use in my daily work. As a member of the “Supply Chain Organization” I am responsible for interacting very closely with our

Director of Quality as well as the entire team of Quality Engineers to ensure that the organization is performing to the highest quality levels possible. This course has better prepared me for success throughout the next phase of my career in the Aerospace and Defense industry.

### Reference

Foster, S. T. (2013). *Managing quality: Integrating the supply chain* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

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